



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

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Sport can open the way to Christ

The Church and sport can learn from each other in many ways.

A new document, *Open the Way to Christ*, published by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, explains how sport is a gift which can draw people closer to Christ.

“The connection between sport and faith in Australia has been more visible in recent times, with elite athletes seen praying on the field and others speaking openly about their faith,” the document says.

“At the local level, many parents and guardians are generously giving their time and talents to volunteer at sporting clubs, and in doing so, are actively living out their faith and witnessing to the Gospel.

“Further, those who play sport can bear witness to their faith by exemplifying values such as fair play, teamwork, respect for others and sacrifice.”

Archbishop Christopher Prowse, chair of the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry, said both the sporting field and Catholic parishes are “places of encounter”.

“They offer a space to teach and accompany people – young and old - in their relationship with Jesus,” he said.

National Centre for Evangelisation director Malcolm Hart said a range of resources were being developed to assist parishes in using sport to reach out to their communities.

“With so many involved in sport around the country, there is a wonderful opportunity for people of faith to contribute to this renewal by exemplifying the virtues sport can foster, and in doing so, witnessing to the Gospel and opening the way to Christ,” he said.

“We encourage individuals, families, parishes, and dioceses to prayerfully consider how they can best engage in this vibrant mission field.”

Visit the website at nca.catholic.org.au/sport and find the full document [here](#).